

Last week, this House passed legislation that will end a GI Bill disparity between the National Guard and Reserve members so that every single servicemember can access the benefits their sacrifices have earned.

And last month, President Biden signed the REMOTE Act into law to extend legislation to protect student benefits for veterans.

In southern Nevada alone, 200 veterans were facing cuts in their benefits, but with our votes in the House and Senate and President Biden's signature, those benefits were extended, and it was just that easy.

These are just a few examples of the bipartisan wins this Congress has been able to accomplish for veterans.

You see, a lot of legislation before us, especially bills that serve our veterans, are common sense. And I encourage Washington to not lose sight of those two words: Common sense.

HONORING SURVIVORS AND FAMILIES OF FORMER HOSTAGES OF THE IRAN HOSTAGE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call upon my fellow Members of Congress to support H.R. 1179, which will award the Congressional Gold Medal to the survivors of the Iran hostage crisis and to the families of the former hostages who are, sadly, no longer with us.

Over 40 years ago, in November of 1979, protests in the Iranian capital of Tehran led to crowds storming the United States Embassy and taking the staff inside as hostages. Fifty-two Americans, made up of both civilian and military personnel, were made prisoners in our own embassy and became victims of a terrorist attack upon international law.

For over a year, the hostages were denied their basic human dignity with their captors inflicting upon them increasing physical and psychological torture, to include simulated executions. Madam Speaker, they would take these hostages and go through the motions of being executed, often pulling the trigger of an empty gun to instill fear. It was wrong. These brave Americans held strong throughout their harrowing ordeal, never once losing faith in each other or that they may return home to their families again. Their courage and patriotism are an inspiration to all of us today, just as it was to our Nation 40 years ago.

Through diplomatic success, all 52 of the hostages were released in January of 1981, free to return home to their loved ones and their country, with this January 20 marking the 41st anniversary of their freedom. Despite that, many of them have not recovered from their trauma; to this day still haunted by what they had to endure. Alongside having to carry these burdens for over

40 years, these 52 heroes never received proper recognition from their government for the sacrifices they were forced to make in captivity. They are true American heroes, and it is time that Congress acknowledges them as such, which is why I call upon my colleagues to support H.R. 1179. The awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal to the survivors and the families of the deceased will not only bring justice to these patriots, but also demonstrate this Nation's commitment to protect those whose human rights would be violated.

This bipartisan bill is a symbol of our Nation's ability to come together to honor our heroes; currently there are 145 cosponsors of this bill with a near even split between Democrats and Republicans.

Additionally, I would like to thank the tremendous efforts of Commission 52 for helping to spread awareness of this bill and gathering support for it. Their commitment to righting the wrongs of over 40 years ago is an inspiration to all.

HONORING WANDA YOUNG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB) for 5 minutes.

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Wanda Young, former singer of the renowned Motown Marvelettes and resident of the Inkster community in Michigan's 13th District Strong.

Ms. Young made her mark on Motown when she was asked to join the local singing group comprised of many of the Inkster High School students and alumni.

The group, now known as the Marvelettes, was quickly signed to the Tamla record label, later known as Motown Records.

They earned Motown one of its biggest hits with "Please, Mr. Postman."

Wanda Young sang lead on many of the recordings including the hit, "Don't Mess Around with Bill."

Ms. Young was an integral part of the Motown music scene and defining sound of the 1960s.

Ms. Young's example has inspired countless women and African American performers across our country.

Please join me in recognizing Wanda Young's contributions to our Nation and Michigan's 13th District Strong as we honor her legacy at home and across the globe.

RECOGNIZING MICHELLE MARTINEZ

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michelle Martinez, Detroit resident and environmental justice warrior from Michigan's 13th District Strong as she departs as executive director from the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition.

For many years, Michelle has been a pillar of our community, advocating for clean air and water, and fighting against environmental racism that hurts our neighbors' quality of life.

Michelle has worked tirelessly, and I firsthand saw this myself, for various organizations over the last 15 years and has never wavered in seeking justice for the people who live with the effects of pollution.

I worked closely with Michelle on a number of initiatives when I served in the Michigan State legislature, and she has been an amazing person to watch grow as an advocate and leader in our State.

Michelle has always taken a bold approach to making transformative change for our communities that is meaningful and has never shied away from a challenge.

So please join me in recognizing Michelle Martinez' outstanding contributions to the communities of Michigan's 13th Congressional District as we wish her well on her next venture.

CONGRESS HAS A CLEAR MANDATE TO PROTECT, RESTORE, AND EXPAND VOTING RIGHTS IN AMERICA

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to make clear that we, as Representatives of the people, have a clear mandate to protect, restore, and expand voting rights in our Nation.

In my hometown of Detroit, election workers and community members were intimidated, shouted at, and disrespected for simply counting the votes of our community, a majority Black community, in November of 2020.

People banged on the windows, Madam Speaker, on the counting room just because they didn't want Black and Brown votes to be counted.

Our community was treated like we were unworthy of making our voices heard at the ballot box.

This should not be so complicated.

If our colleagues in the Senate fail to pass the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act, their inaction will send a clear message to folks that voter suppression is okay. Voter suppression is not okay. It simply is not. Intimidating our election workers is not okay. Inaction is not an option, and we must deliver for the people.

AN ATTACK ON ELECTION INTEGRITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, House Democrats this past week passed a bill to nationalize elections. On a party-line vote Democrats, led by Speaker PELOSI, passed a bill nationalizing elections in an attempt to maintain power.

If ultimately enacted, this would consolidate power and control of all elections in the hands of Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic Party.

This bill is an attack on election integrity.

Their claims of voter suppression could not be further from the truth. The 2020 election had the highest turnout in 120 years.